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"The Story of the U.S. Army Talmud." 1949-1960, 1988-2002.

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10 January 2002

The Story of the U.S. Army Talmud

By: Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

At the Chrysler Museum in Norfolk, VA on May 22, 2001 there took place a unique ceremony to dedicate an exhibit. The object of the exhibit was an edition of the basic volume of Jewish law called the Talmud which was published in Germany by the U.S. Army shortly after WWII. There ceremony also honored Leonard Strelitz, a leading citizen of Norfolk and a national leader of American Jewry. A group of his friends had acquired a set of the Army Talmud (19 volumes in all) and Leonard's widow Joyce, together with these friends arranged for the exhibit. Representing the U.S. Army at the ceremony was the Chief Chaplain.

The publication of the 19-volume set of the Talmud by the Carl Winter printing plant in Heidelberg, Germany, sponsored by the United States Army, was a phenomenon, a rarity, an incredible story which can only be understood in the context of post-war Jewish experience in Europe. Here is the context.

The insane cruelty of the Nazi regime murdered the largest portion of European Jewry and burned millions of books as well as people. The ragged survivors in 1945 had no homes to which they could return to their past, no land of refuge which could serve as their future, no hopes on which to build a new life. They were called refugees or survivors or displaced persons, DP's – and they wandered throughout Poland, Lithuania, Romania and the eastern provinces of Russia.

There was no State of Israel yet, but there was an underground force called Haganah, one of whose functions was to protect the Jews living in Palestine, and another function was to help organize the ragged band of wandering Jews of Europe. The safest

place of refuge was the American Zone of occupied Germany. The American flag and the American Army betokened safety. And the Haganah acted as the shepherd, helping the hapless to cross borders, moving westward, using trains, trucks and basic foot-power.

When the war ended in 1945, General Eisenhower visited some concentration camps, was visibly upset and turned to a Jewish chaplain, Major Judah Nadich, to give him advice as to what the army could do to offer relief to these bedraggled remnants. The idea was born that the commanding General needed an Advisor on Jewish matters. Eisenhower was going home. His successor was 4-star General Joseph McNarney. The idea was formalized at the War Department in Washington and a civilian official was appointed with the title of Advisor on Jewish Affairs to the Commanding General. The Advisor carried a simulated rank of two-star General, which entitled him to have a uniformed officer as his deputy. The advisor was Rabbi Philip Bernstein of Rochester, N.Y., and he called me from Berlin to become his deputy. Our office in the I.G. Farben building in Frankfurt was next door to General McNarney's office.

In July 1946 more than a year after the war was over, a pogrom took place in the Polish town of Kielce. Forty-two Jews were murdered and laid out around the fountain in the town square. This started a flight of panic. McNarney sent Bernstein and myself to Poland to assess the degree of panic and its effect on people fleeing to get into Germany. We wrote a report to McNarney estimating that 150,000 Jews would be fleeing toward the American Zone. McNarney sent Bernstein to Washington to obtain direction from President Truman, who immediately ordered McNarney to keep the border open and accept all Jews in flight.

That humanitarian decision resulted, during 1946-1947, in the establishment of 64 Jewish DP camps throughout the American Zones of Germany and Austria containing 250,000 Jews, some from as far east as Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan in Russia.

This large DP population was supported by the U.S. Army, the Jewish Agency of Palestine and the Joint Distribution Committee. The DPs created an overall body of their own, called The Central Committee of Liberated Jews in Germany, to which General McNarney gave a charter of recognition.

The Central Committee had a chief rabbi, Samuel Snieg and his assistant Rabbi Samuel Rose, both of whom had lived through Dachau. These two men generated a plan for printing the Talmud and gathered their arguments in a plea to the U.S. Army:

“Would the Army make a major effort in rebuilding that culture which the Nazis had sought to obliterate, thus vindicating the finest principles for which American democracy stands? Would the General print the Talmud in Germany? An edition published in Germany under the auspices of the American Army of occupation would be an historic work and make a tremendous contribution to the morale of the DPs.”

Then the two DP Orthodox rabbis turned to Philip Bernstein, the Advisor to the commanding General, beseeching his assistance and intervention. Though a Reform rabbi, Bernstein took on their cause, as did I. On August 29, 1946, in his official capacity, he submitted to General McNarney a short “Memorandum on Publication of the Talmud.” By October 8, McNarney’s Headquarters justified the “extensive undertaking” to General Lucius Clay, the military Governor of Berlin. Thus began the inevitable march through channels until the project landed on the proper desk of Colonel William Paley (later head of CBS), the director of information control. His approval followed, but he pointed out there was an incredible shortage of paper. The number of Army libraries functioning in Germany was 50, and that was the number of Talmud sets which the Army would provide, so the DP’s in their camps who wanted to study the Talmud could go to the nearest American library and draw out a volume or two at a time, since each set contained 19 volumes.

The official authorization came on February 4, 1947, when General McNarney explained to Rabbi Bernstein and me that the original request for 3,000 sets was not possible, but that 50 sets could be provided at this time at Army expense and, McNarney continued, "It has been further agreed that the American Jewish Relief Agencies will provide at a future date the paper stock for the subsequent printing of all copies of the Talmud in excess of the 50 sets."

That opened the door for the Joint Distribution Committee, American Jewry's major relief agency, and the Vaad Hatzala (Orthodox) to move into the picture. The Joint provided two sets of the Vilna Talmud (no easy matter, since no Talmud was being printed in the U.S. and none was to be found in Europe), to be photocopied and plates made. The Joint also scoured Sweden for paper – all this at its expense.

The actual printing started in November 1948 and the first volumes were planned to be sent to the U.S., for two international conferences, one by the Joint and one by the United Jewish Appeal, as well as presentations to President Truman and General Eisenhower. Two other volumes were targeted for President Chaim Weizmann and Chief Rabbi Isaac Herzog in Israel. The publicity prepared for all these events never occurred. The War of Independence was raging in the new State of Israel, and publicity fanfare did not seem appropriate. In May 1949, General Lucius Clay received his volume, as did General Mc Narney, as did President Weizmann and Rabbi Herzog. Various numbers have been offered as to exactly how many sets were actually printed. There seems to be no official number.

The Paris office of the Joint accepted the responsibility of shipping sets to various destinations. All told, Paris thought it had 650 sets for export. The destinations were as follows:

500 – to Israel

50 – remaining in Germany for army libraries

60 – to U.S. and Canada

22 – France and Algeria

10 – Italy

5 – Hungary

5 – Morocco

3 – Tunisia

5 –1 each to South Africa, Greece, Yugoslavia, Norway and Sweden

660

Rabbis Snieg and Rose, Rabbi Philip Bernstein and myself were each given a set in appreciation for our direct and active involvement in the final success.

Rabbis Snieg and Rose wrote the dedication printed in the first volume.

“In 1946 we turned to the American Army Commander to assist us in the publication of the Talmud. In all the years of exile it has often happened that various governments and forces have burned Jewish books. Never did any publish them for us. This is the first time in the thousands of years of Jewish history that a government has helped in the publication of the Talmud, which is the source of our being and the length of our days. The Army of the United States saved us from death, protects us in this land, and through their aid does the Talmud appear again in Germany.”



Dear Herb,

This guy's face
represents my sentiments!
We're disappointed, but
will soldier on without you.
Most importantly, get
better and stay well —

1 . 10 1



Hope you're feeling better soon

Jhys

August 3, 2001

Dear Herb,

Thanks for the WJC newsletter containing the Talmud article. It WAS gratifying. I'm enclosing a tape of a piece done by WHRO, our local PBS affiliate, that I think is splendid (despite the fact that I am decidedly UNtelegenic!) I thought you'd enjoy it (after fast forwarding thru the first local bit). Perhaps you might have some ideas as to further uses for it.

So glad your health is improving and that you're back in harness again. I'll be in NY Aug. 16th and 17th on my way to Europe, so if you have any time then, call me.

Thanks,

Joyce

Congregation Beth Chaverim
Dr. Israel Zoberman, Founding Rabbi

6-28-01

Dear Herbert,

Sorry you could not
join us for the remarkable
event but thanks for
making it possible!

All good wishes in which
Joyce Strelitz and all
join me!

Shalom,
Israel

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change. What particular source of energy contributes more relief and does not emit any emissions of any consequence? Nuclear energy. The nuclear industry contributes 22 percent of the power generated in this country. We haven't done a thing in that area.

When we talk about gasoline prices, why are they so high? Obviously, it is the law of supply and demand. Even Congress can't change that. We haven't built a new refinery in 25 years. The last new one was built in my State of Alaska. The demand is up and we have more people driving.

An interesting thing to notice, while we have other sources of energy for power generation, is that America moves on oil. I wish we had another alternative, but we don't. Our ships, our trains, trucks, cars, airplanes—we don't fly in and out of Washington, DC, on hot air. Somebody has to drill the oil and refine it and transport it and put it in the airplanes, and so forth.

My point is clear. We don't have any other alternative for energy to move America, other than oil at this time. The technology simply doesn't exist.

We haven't built a new coal-fired plant in this country since 1995. Suddenly, we find that our electric transmission lines haven't been expanded, our natural gas transmission lines haven't been expanded. That is why we have an energy crisis. That is why it is different than ever before. It has all kind of come together like the "perfect storm." Everything has come together because we haven't had a policy. We haven't acted and now the American public is saying: What's going on? Why can't Congress fix it? Congress is pointing the finger at everybody and everything, blaming each other instead of moving ahead in a bipartisan manner.

The Democratic leadership refuses to put energy on the priority calendar for this body. I find that unconscionable. America's No. 1 priority is nowhere on the Democrats' list. I think, by holding up this process, they are holding up the prosperity of this Nation. One of our freedoms is to have plentiful and affordable supplies of energy. Our standard of living, to a large degree, is dependent upon that. Do we want to change that standard of living? Clearly, we do not. We want to advance that standard of living by bringing on affordable energy, alternative energy.

A lot of people say, well, conservation is the answer. Conservation is important. We can do a better job, but it will not make up the deficiency that exists. Some say alternatives. Some say renewables. But they constitute a very small percentage, even if you include hydroelectric, which is a renewable. Renewables constitute less than 4 percent of the total energy mix in this country. I wish they contributed more.

I am just afraid the Democrats would rather see this energy issue as a partisan issue, as opposed to a bipartisan victory for both Republicans and Democrats. I can only reach the conclusion that the Democrats are pulling

the plug on the energy solution, figuring they are better off to attack the President, the White House, big oil, than to address the problem. If they do, we are all going to be left in the dark.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CORZINE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be a period for morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SURVIVOR'S TALMUD DEDICATION CEREMONY

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to share with my colleagues an historical event which took place at the Chrysler Museum in Norfolk, VA on May 22, 2001. The event memorializes a remarkable chapter in Army history that occurred after World War II.

The event was the dedication of the Survivor's Talmud Exhibit which was done in honor of a truly great man, Leonard Strelitz, by his close friends. The story of the Survivor's Talmud speaks to the strength and resolve of a very determined people of Jewish faith some 54 years ago; and, to the resourcefulness and caring of a handful of U.S. Army soldiers.

Today, I place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD excerpts from the ceremony that convey the historical and spiritual splendor of this extraordinary tale to include: the Invocation, by Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach; Remarks and Benediction by Major General Gaylord T. Gunhus, Chief of Chaplains, U.S. Army; and Remarks by Mr. Marvin Simon and Mr. Walter Segaloff, hosts of the evening's events.

Due to Senate business on the day of the ceremony, I was not able to attend so I am also placing in the RECORD a copy of a letter I wrote to be read during the ceremony.

As this magnificent exhibit tours throughout the country, I hope it will instill in younger generations the critical importance of preserving human rights, individual dignity, and freedom. It will remind future generations of the incomprehensible sacrifices of the World War II generation and their need to always remain alert to prevent a recurrence in the future.

I ask unanimous consent to print the material to which I referred.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

REMARKS OF RABBI DR. ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

Mekor Hachaim, Source of All Life, Our God, Goodness' Guide, Dear and Distinguished Friends and Guests:

We have gathered on a momentous occasion at this enchanting setting of the Chrysler Museum of Art, dedicated to civilization's creative celebration of life, mindful that our Norfolk and Hampton Roads are home to the military might for sacred freedom's sake of the world's sole superpower, allowing the human enterprise to flourish into a blessing. Here from whence our heroic sons and daughters sailed to brave history's harshest storm of World War II, we recall with lasting gratitude and devotion our proud nation's sacrificial contribution in blood and spirit to ending the threat to creation of the Nazi kingdom of death, with its genocidal destruction of a third of the Jewish people and untold suffering to humanity.

I stand before you, profoundly awed, son of Polish Holocaust survivors who spent from 1947 to 1949 with my family in the Displaced Persons Camp of Wetzlar at Frankfurt, benefiting from a much appreciated reassuring embrace at a trying time of turmoil and transition. The printing for us of the Talmud on German soil facilitated by the U.S. Army, to save the Jewish soul, was an act of enduring love we shall always cherish. We knew that our miraculous physical perseverance was ultimately rooted in preserving our unique spiritual heritage that was Hitler's final target, seeking to eradicate from the planet Earth the essential Judeo-Christian values and ideals.

Honoring our U.S. Army and government through affirming by special friends the blessed memory of beloved Leonard Strelitz with acquiring a full 19 volume edition of that legendary Babylonian Talmud publication is most appropriate indeed, along with this being the beginning of the traveling treasured exhibit sponsored by the American Jewish Historical Society. Leonard's towering stature propelled him to rise to new heights of commitment, caring and compassion. A great American, the prophetic vision was fulfilled in him with both the lion and lamb dwelling in his big heart of a true leader with commanding presence. He singularly served the surviving remnant of his Jewish people as a tough lion, national chairman of the United Jewish Appeal aiding the embattled State of Israel, as well as a tender lamb in support of all worthy causes with the crown jewel of the Leonard R. Strelitz Diabetes Institutes at Eastern Virginia Medical School, placing personal success to serve the public agenda, most ably prodding others to follow suit, for none could refuse him.

To him, his dear wife Joyce who nourished and sustained him and the entire family, our heartfelt thanks. Leonard's inspiring legacy is forever intertwined with our tradition's best impulse and the noblest in our nation's character, shining testimony to his faith's abiding message to all of shalom's promise, purpose and peace. Let us say Amen.

[Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, is President of the Hampton Roads Board of Rabbis and Chairman of the Community Relations Council of the United Jewish Federation of Tidewater. He was born in Kazakhstan in 1945.]

SPEECH AND BENEDICTION BY MAJOR GENERAL GAYLORD T. GUNHUS

On behalf of the United States Army, it is with great pleasure that I accept this plaque. Thank you for this symbol, of your gracious recognition for the service our Army rendered to the Jewish community in post War

Germany. It is an honor to be here today to acknowledge the events that led to the printing of the Survivors Army Talmud and to acknowledge the role United States Army leaders had in making the Talmud printing possible.

Most Americans are unaware of the history and story, which we have heard and celebrate today.

Europe in the mid 20th century, a site of the worst carnage and evil in the modern period, was freed at great cost a cost few of us here were able to witness first hand.

This Great War of liberation against the forces of totalitarianism, posed for the entire world, then and now, an open question. Can mankind find the goodness within the soul to defend against the impulses of tyranny and hatred? This is a question we must answer daily for ourselves, and for the sake of our children, the heirs of the future.

It is with great pride in the values, which our nation represents, that I stand here today. This pride, which we share in common, is tempered by the knowledge of the sacrifice and courage of those, who in times past, gave their lives for our fondest hopes of liberty.

We know that a free nation must rise above the simple pride bestowed by victory in war. A free nation, if it desires to be great, must be the servant of freedom and the defender of dignity for every man and woman. The Army of our nation in post war Europe, was then, and is today, more than a mighty physical force.

Similarly, the printing of the Talmud in Post War Germany is more than simply the printing of books. The event for which we gather today to commemorate and honor, the restoration of the Jewish religious and cultural life in Germany after the defeat of Nazi forces, is the result of many individuals labor and courage. Some of these leaders were men in uniform some were not, some were religious leaders some were not, but each was connected by a common commitment to turn back the tide of darkness that had spilled across the continent.

For me, this event signifies the values and principles of our nation and the institution that I serve, the United States Army.

It would be my hope that every citizen could witness this exhibit and read the history that helped bring back the light to those that may otherwise have lost hope. May the words of the Scriptures ever be heard, "Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one."

On behalf of (Army Chief of Staff) General (Eric) Shinseki, and all the members of the Army, past and present, thank you for your gift of gratitude and this symbol of appreciation.

BENEDICTION

As we conclude today's ceremony honoring the many participants including the 3rd U.S. Army for bringing the light of the Torah to the victims of persecution, we are ever grateful, as Americans and men and women of faith, for the blessings of freedom and privilege of living in this great land. We ask, Lord, that you watch and protect our brave soldiers who stand guard over the nation throughout the world.

May this magnificent Army Talmud Exhibit serve as a poignant reminder that Your Word, is the "tree of life for those who grasp it, and all who upheld it are blessed. Its ways are pleasantness and all its paths are peace." And, as we read, in Proverbs (6:22-23) "When you walk, it will lead you; When you lie down, it will watch over you; And when you are awake it will talk with you. For these commands are a lamp, this teaching a light."

Let us, as people of God, work together to build a world free from intolerance and prejudice. All this we ask in Your name. Amen.

EXCERPTS FROM REMARKS OF WALTER SEGALOFF

Good Evening everyone. I am Walter Segaloff and I want to thank you for joining us for this very historic occasion.

This evening is special for two reasons— First, we deal with a forgotten chapter in our history, that is "The Story of the Jewish—Displaced Persons—From 1945 thru 1949"—and the unique part that the United States Army played in that tragedy.

Secondly, we honor Leonard Strelitz through the dedication of the Army Talmud Exhibit to him. Many of us knew Leonard as "our leader" or affectionately as "the Don of the Southern Mafia." He was the one who energized so many of us, the one who solicited us, and by way of example through his and his brother Buddy's and their family's extraordinary level of giving set an example that we willingly and in many cases "unwillingly" followed. Most of the time we felt better about our giving, we felt prouder, for we knew we were making vital contributions to the birth of a nation and the gathering in of the remnants of the Holocaust—the displaced persons of Europe.

I would like to recognize a number of people who are in the audience tonight for this occasion:

TRADOC Chief of Chaplains, COL Douglas McLeroy and his wife, Dana;

Dr. William Hennessey, Director of the Chrysler Museum of Art in Norfolk;

Dr. Michael Feldberg, Director of the American Jewish Historical Society in New York City;

Dr. Arthur Kaplan, chairman, of the Tidewater Jewish Foundation and his wife Phyllis;

Philip S. Rovner, Executive Director of the Tidewater Jewish Federation;

Ms. Annabel Sacks, President United Jewish Federation of Tidewater;

Mark Goldstein, Executive Vice President of the United Jewish Federation of Tidewater;

Rabbi Michael Panitz of Temple Israel who prepared a pamphlet on the Talmud that is available at the exhibit;

Joel R. Rubin, President, Rubin Cawley and Associates;

U.S. Senator John Warner.

We are privileged to have with us a truly unique group of people who honor us with their presence—Local Holocaust Survivors:

Esther Goldman;

Alfred Dreyfus;

David and Brinia Hendler;

David Katz;

Bronia Drucker;

Hanns Loewenbach;

Kitty and Abbott Saks;

Aron Weintraub who lived in a DP camp after World War II in Germany.

Tonight the Jewish Community in Hampton Roads Virginia representing Jewish people everywhere is pleased to dedicate an exhibit commemorating the decision by the United States Army 54 years ago, in post war Germany to print complete sets of the Babylonian Talmud for the survivors of the Holocaust.

It was a remarkable humanitarian gesture and was evidence of the great spirit of our nation and its kindness to people who have been beset by human tragedy that defied comparison or imagination.

Later in the program you will hear from Marvin Simon how this exhibit and program came about.

In preparing this exhibit, Dr. Michael Feldberg from the American Jewish Historical Society expressed his enthusiasm for the project and noted: ". . . I understand that Leonard's Hebrew name is R-YEA (aryon), which means lion, and that his family name

Strelitz in Russian means steel. We would all agree Leonard was truly a man with a lion's heart and a will of steel. His leadership and personal example inspired countless others throughout the country—through them—through us—his work continues to this day. . . ."

A brief overview of the primary reason we are here tonight which is to thank the U.S. Army for their role . . . During these historic times.

During 1945 and 1946, American Jewish organizations such as ORT and the Joint Distribution Committee lobbied to improve the Jewish DP's living conditions. At their urging, President Harry S. Truman appointed the Harrison Commission to investigate the treatment of Jewish DP's. The commission reported, "As matters now stand, we appear to be treating the Jews as the Nazis treated them except we do not exterminate them. They are in concentration camps in large numbers under our military guard instead of S.S. troops. One is led to wonder whether the German people, seeing this, are not supposing that we are following or at least condoning Nazi policy."

Truman ordered General Dwight D. Eisenhower, commander of U.S. forces in Europe, to "get these people out of camps and into decent housing until they can be repatriated or evacuated. . . . I know you will agree with me that we have a particular responsibility toward these victims of persecution and tyranny who are in our zone. . . . We have no better opportunity to demonstrate this than by the manner in which we ourselves actually treat the survivors remaining in Germany."

Part of restoring their lives meant reinvigorating Judaism. Remember, along with humans, the Nazi's burned Jewish books, synagogues and schools. By 1945, not one complete set of the Talmud could be found in Europe.

After Truman's memo to Eisenhower, conditions got much better followed by a high level mission of American Jewish leaders including Rabbi Stephen Wise who visited the camps in a show of support for the DP's and Rabbi Wise thanked the U.S. Army and General McNamary when he said "At its highest levels, the U.S. Army has become sincerely and deeply involved in the effort to make camp life bearable, restoring freedom and dignity to the survivors of the Holocaust."

The Army was showing the very best side of American humanitarianism in its handling of a civilian refugee situation, a task for which it was not trained.

With the U.S. Army's encouragement, a "Charter of Recognition" was written. The U.S. Army was saying something that no other arm of any allied government was yet willing to say—that the Jewish DP's must be recognized as different. All other DP's could be repatriated to a homeland; only the Jews were without one.

The difference could be remedied by a political decision beyond the Army's capability. But in the meantime, the Army would declare, in effect, that Palestine had to be recognized someday as the DP's homeland. Thus, the most important military arm of the United States was accepting the basic premises of the Zionist movement. How remarkable!

I quote from part of Rabbi Herbert Friedman's book "Roots of the Future".

He writes "No matter which camp in Germany I visited, I kept hearing the name of Babenhausen. It became a symbol for restlessness, for the huge problem of being stuck in camps without a solution for the future. The question grew more persistent: "When will we get to Palestine?"

About two months later, I was able to help supply an answer. David Ben-Gurion, chairman of the Jewish Agency, was in Paris, en

route to Switzerland. He wanted to visit a refugee camp—not a model operation, but one in which he could see the true, rough fiber of DP life. I took him to Babenhausen.

Ben Gurion was the clear and undisputed leader of the Jewish population of Palestine (about 600,000 at that time) and the leader of world Jewry's thrust toward a sovereign state. He was a fighter—the small, cocky, bantam rooster—the charismatic, world famous symbol of the Zionist force.

For the occasion, we utilized the camp's largest stable, with a small stage at one end and standing room for thousands of people. Ben-Gurion's presence did indeed produce an electric wave of excitement. So many DP's crowded in that it seemed almost all of the camp's 5,000 residents were pressed into that area. They knew that this dynamic, white-haired man was their link with a history they thought had forgotten them.

For the first time, there were smiles inside the gates of Babenhausen, and then came the inevitable question—poignant, pleading, uncertain, wavering, but persistent: "When, Mr. Ben-Gurion? When will we go to Palestine?"

As Ben-Gurion listened to those questions, he began to weep, the only time in my long relationship with him I saw that happen. The tears fell slowly. He spoke through them, quietly but firmly. I remember his words almost exactly:

"I come to you with empty pockets. I have no British entry certificates to give you. I can only tell you that you are not abandoned, you are not alone, you will not live endlessly in camps like this. All of you who wish to come to Palestine will be brought there as soon as is humanly possible. I bring you no certificates—only hope. Let us sing our national anthem—Hatikvah which means Hope."

In that way, the people of Babenhausen understood that their unloved camp was not the end of the line but a way station on the road to freedom.

After the apparent absence of God during the maniacal years of their torment, the survivors were not strong in religious faith. But they were fierce in their ethnicity; they clung to each other desperately and were loyal to their peoplehood. And, thus the reason we are here tonight—to honor the U.S. Army for their understanding, sympathy, and the morality of their conduct and their help in providing books of traditional significance.

The rest of this remarkable story which 54 years later brings us to tonight is left to Marvin Simon, Senator John Warner, and our guest speaker—Lucian Truscott IV and to Major General Gaylord T. Gunhus, Chief of the U.S. Army Chaplains.

I now call on another giant of our community who was the lead benefactor of this project—the man who made tonight possible. He has worked closely with the American Jewish Historical Society to make sure the exhibit tells the story, both of the Survivor's Talmud and of Leonard Strelitz. Please welcome Marvin Simon.

INTRODUCTION OF SPONSORS BY MARVIN SIMON

Please welcome our guest Senator Chuck Robb—a friend of many of you—a long time proven friend of Israel and the Jewish people—Senator Robb

INTRODUCTION OF SENATOR JOHN WARNER

In 1946, a delegation of DP rabbis approached General Joseph McNarney, commander of the American Zone of Occupied Germany, asking that the Army publish a Talmud. McNarney understood the symbolic significance of their request and received assistance from General Lucian Truscott who had succeeded General George Patton as commander of the 3rd Army.

The grandson of General Lucian Truscott is Historian Lucian Truscott IV and we are pleased that he is with us this evening as our keynote speaker.

Mr. Truscott, whose father was a West Point graduate and Colonel in the Army, is the oldest of five children. Mr. Truscott graduated from West Point in 1969, then made a name for himself by revealing a serious problem with heroin abuse that existed in the service, a revelation that at first did not sit well with the Army and led to his discharge.

Lucian Truscott subsequently became an investigative reporter for the Village Voice, then the best author of Dress Gray, considered one of the best novels ever written about West Point. It became a television mini-series. Mr. Truscott then wrote Dress Blue, a riveting novel about Vietnam. He has also written screenplays and today lives in Los Angeles.

Please welcome Lucian Truscott IV.

INTRODUCTION OF JOYCE STRELITZ

It is my pleasure now to bring you someone who needs no introduction to this audience. Joyce Strelitz. Tonight the benefactors would like to thank the following for tonight would not have been possible without their invaluable participation, work and support in the coordination of the Survivors' Talmud exhibit and dedication.

Thank you to:
American Jewish Historical Society, Executive Director, Dr. Michael Feldberg;
Chrysler Museum of Art, Director Dr. William T. Hennessey and a truly wonderful staff.

Rubin Cawley and Associates, President Joel R. Rubin;

Rabbi Michael Panitz, Temple Israel in Norfolk;

Headquarters TRADOC, Ft. Monroe;
Ft. Eustis Public Affairs;

Ft. Story Public Affairs;

Mr. Mark Goldstein, Executive Director of the Tidewater Jewish Federation and Ms. AnnaBelle Sacks, President of the Tidewater Jewish Federation;

Dr. Arthur Kaplan—President of Tidewater Jewish Foundation;

And last Philip Rover, Executive Director of the Tidewater Jewish Foundation who did a truly wonderful job in a leadership role, his organizational skills, follow through and support, made doing this project a pleasure. Thank you Philip, Beth Jacobsen, and Ellen Antai and the rest of your staff.

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, May 22, 2001.

To the Special Participants and Guests of the Survivors' Talmud Dedication Ceremony and members of the Strelitz Family:

It is with extreme disappointment that I pen this note to be read in my stead at today's ceremony. I had planned until one hour ago to be with you but the only thing senators must do is to vote, so here I must remain—voting—on legislation to provide federal tax relief.

My thoughts, however, are truly with you as the Survivors' Talmud Exhibit is dedicated and a long awaited 'Thank you' is delivered to the U.S. Army. This extraordinary story speaks to the strength and resolve of a determined people and it is in honor of a great man, Leonard Strelitz.

In a war ravaged Europe, Army soldiers managed to gather scarce resources, that "officially" did not exist, in order to publish the Talmud. By the end of 1948, 100 copies had been published and a brave people had renewed hope for their future.

That is the historic past; now we look to the future. The citizens of this community have joined in this commemorative event to

preserve a unique chapter of history for future generations to more fully understand the sacrifices, losses, and the courage of the World War II generation.

With great humility I mention that I was a young sailor in the closing months of World War II, and today, I experience stunning disbelief of how few of this generation have any remembrance of that period of history. Future generations must always remain alert to prevent abuses of human rights, individual dignity, and freedom. I thank those present tonight for their vigilance and recognition of the initiatives of the citizen soldiers of World War II.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely,

JOHN WARNER.

QUESTIONS ON CONCEALED WEAPONS LAW

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, last Wednesday the Michigan Supreme Court heard oral arguments on whether or not the State should allow a new concealed weapon law to go into effect without being put before the voters in a referendum. I oppose the law because it would undermine the authority of local gun boards and explode the number of concealed weapons on Michigan's streets. As the Justices deliberate this issue, recent press reports have raised a number of disturbing questions about the law.

For example, how will the corner drug store deal with a suspected shoplifter knowing that every person could be legally armed? Will emergency rooms and board rooms be filled with armed citizens? If so, what will that mean for public safety? Think about it. One Michigan employment expert perhaps described it best: "How many times have people seen others react to situations or stress in the workplace, or react to a situation and think, if they had a gun?"

A recent article from the Oakland Press in Michigan refers to a bumper sticker that says, "An armed society is a polite society." While I am all for improving civility, I don't believe that arming our citizens is the best way to achieve it. And, I hope that I don't have the opportunity to be proven correct.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about hate crimes legislation I introduced with Senator KENNEDY in March of this year. The Local Law Enforcement Act of 2001 would add new categories to current hate crimes legislation sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred July 26, 1990 in New York City. A gang of men shouting anti-gay slurs attacked three men. Seven men were arrested in the attack. One victim was slashed on the face and another was cut. The assailants picked up the third and threatened to throw him in the Hudson River.

**Rabbi Israel Zoberman
4470 Hialeah Dr.
Virginia Beach, VA 23464**

Memorial Day Story: Talmud Published by U.S. Army

A Rare Edition of WWII 'Survivor's Talmud Is for Sale in Israel, Asking Price, \$12,000

By PETER HELLMAN
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW YORK — Interested in collecting Judaica and army memorabilia? Have we got a Memorial Day special for you: An ultra-rare 19-volume set of the Babylonian Talmud that, believe it or not, was published in 1948 by the U.S. Army, to whom it is dedicated.

It was printed in the heart of what, just three years earlier, had been the Third Reich. The full set, in need of a loving restoration, is being offered by Colors of Jerusalem, a Judaica gallery in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City. The price is \$12,000.

Why on earth would the Army publish an edition of the Talmud? The unlikely story starts in 1946, when Jewish displaced persons who'd survived the Shoah were flowing into the American-occupied zone of Germany. They'd kept their lives but lost their holy books. In many cases, pious Jews had been forced by the Nazis to throw their own libraries into bonfires. Astonishingly, not a single complete set of the Talmud could be found extant anywhere in Western Europe. Two Orthodox rabbis who had survived Dachau approached Philip Bernstein, a Reform rabbi from Rochester, N.Y., then a special adviser to the U.S. military commander in Germany, General Joseph McNarney. Would Bernstein try to persuade the Army to authorize the printing of a new edition of the Talmud? So far as anyone knew, no gentile entity had ever agreed to do such a thing.

McNarney was sympathetic to Bernstein's request, as was the military governor of Berlin, Lucius Clay. But the difficulties were immense. Paper was so scarce in Europe, even for the victors, that military memos were turned over and typed on again. Printing supplies were also difficult to come by. To the bureaucrats who weighed Bernstein's request, the Talmud was as much a puzzle as it is to many secular Jews. One scribbled a note asking if the language would be "Hebrew or German?" Key support came from Colonel William Paley, commander of the Army's "information control" division in Germany. The elegant chairman of CBS in civilian life, Paley was as secularized a Jew as one could imagine. Another eloquent proponent was young Menachem Schneerson, then living in Paris, destined to become the Lubavitcher rebbe. "The reprinting of this vast treasure would have been an occasion for rejoicing at all times," he wrote. "In our present day...[it] is not only a fitting monument to our great tragedy, but it fills an urgent need."

Against all odds, the U.S. Army approved the publication of 50 sets

of the Talmud on February 4, 1947. That was a severe cutback from the 3,000 sets Bernstein had requested, but that number would have required almost 2 million sheets of paper — far more than the army could allot. As it was, paper of different types was requisitioned for the project, meaning that not all pages in each volume would look alike. With no local Talmuds available to copy, two sets were imported from New York. Zinc plates were used in the printing process, and the first copies rolled off the presses at the Carl Winter Press in Heidelberg in November 1948. It took two years to complete the job. Thanks to support from the Joint Distribution Committee, 150 sets were actually produced.

They were, apparently, the last Talmuds to be printed in Europe. "The torch was then passed to America and Israel," says Linda Feinberg, manager of Colors of Jerusalem. "So for us, this set has a special poignancy."

There's no chance of overlooking the origin of this edition. At the bottom of the title page is a grim illustration, framed by barbed wire, of two prisoners picking up a corpse in a death camp. It includes the sadly apt words from Psalm 119: "They all but obliterated me from the Earth, but I forsook not thy precepts." But the barbed wire leads up to palm trees and a por-



TALMUD'S TITLE PAGE

trait of the Heavenly City lit by a rising sun, with these words: "From bondage to redemption, from deep darkness to great light." On the next page is a dedication to the U.S. Army written in both Hebrew and English, ending with these words: "The Jewish DP's will never forget the generous impulses...of the American forces, to whom they owe so much."

According to Ms. Feinberg, many sets of the Survivor's Talmud

were split up after publication, with single volumes being given to individual rabbis. A few complete sets can be found in libraries, including the Library of Congress. Currently, Ms. Feinberg knows of no other full set for sale.

For Ken Schoen, a Jewish book dealer in South Deerfield, Mass., what's touching about the Survivor's Talmud is that "these Jews who'd survived the Shoah did just what the Jews did who went off to Yavneh after the destruction of the Second Temple." "They knew they had to get back to basics," says Mr. Schoen. "That meant studying their holy texts."

Ms. Feinberg won't disclose the name of the previous owner of this copy of the Survivor's Talmud. But she does say that it ended up in the hands of a Jewish chaplain in Germany. He returned to America with it, only to move to Israel the 1970s. After the chaplain's death, the Talmud was sold by his children. "For me," says Ms. Feinberg, "I love that it made aliya."

But if the director of the American Jewish Historical Society, Michael Feldberg, has his way, this Survivor's Talmud could end up coming full circle. "I am working on finding a donor who'd buy it," says Mr. Feldberg, "for presentation to the Jewish chapel at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point."

From: **Jamie Goldberg <jamie@wexner.org>**
To: **joel@rubincawley.com, jstrelitz@aol.com**
Subject: **Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman**
Send reply to: **jamie@wexner.org**
Date sent: **Tue, 15 May 2001 09:39:13 -0400**

Dear Mr. Rubin,

Rabbi Herbert Friedman has undergone an angiogram on May 8th, a carotid artery doppler examination on May 11th, and an angioplasty to be performed on May 17th. The medical advice of his doctors clearly states that he should not make the trip to Norfolk on May 22.

He has researched the history of the Army Talmud and written a full report which is attached and can be read in whole or in part by anyone you designate. Or, if you prefer, the document can be xeroxed and distributed to the audience.

He expresses sincere regrets that he cannot be present, for he had deep affection for Leonard Strelitz in whose honor this Talmud is dedicated. And he has a personal interest in the project for he worked hard in 1946-47 to bring it to completion.

He is truly sorry not to be able to attend.

Sincerely,
Jamie Goldberg
Assistant to Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

Attachments:
F:\USERS\Jamie\HAF\HAF Norfolk speech.doc

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May 16, 2001

Rabbi Herbert Friedman
The Wexner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear Rabbi Friedman,

I knew that the Archives had to have additional information on the Talmud project, and I finally found the files in question. Enclosed please find selected photocopies, which may provide you with a fuller picture of the enterprise.

My apologies for the delay.

Sincerely,

Shelley Helfand
Reference Archivist

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45/64
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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Files

October 27, 1988

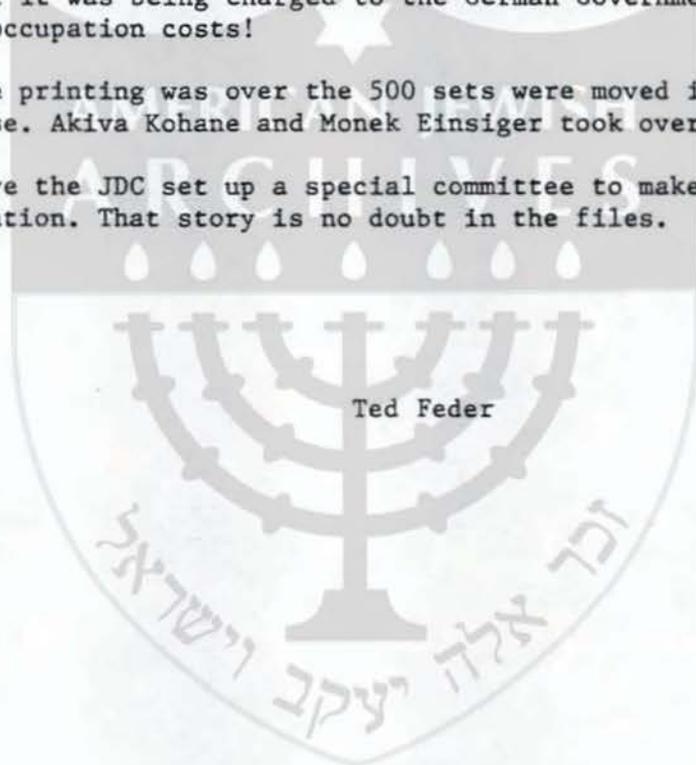
FROM: Theodore D. Feder

The Jerusalem Post of 12 October 1988 carried an article entitled "Talmud from the Ashes." It covered a project of the U.S. Army to print the Babylonian Talmud at the request of the Rabbinic leaders. In 1946 the Army agreed to print the Talmud. A throw-away line in the article states that "The Joint Distribution Committee helped with the financing." A misnomer, to say the least. Without our involvement the Army would have printed 50 sets. Our participation was responsible for 500 sets coming off the press.

The facts:

1. The Rabbinical organization represented by Rabbi Samuel Snieg and Rabbi Shmuel Rose were part of ~~a parcel~~ of the "Committee of Liberated Jews of the U.S. Zone of Germany." This committee was completely subventioned by JDC and had their headquarters across the street from the JDC office at 3 Siebert Str., in Munich. What all this means is that the JDC was very much involved in the whole project.
2. There was an "advisor of Jewish affairs" to the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Army in European headquarters in Frankfurt. In addition, Rabbi Herb Friedman was in this office, and Abe Hyman. I can't recall who obtained a good copy of the Babylonian Shas, the Army or the JDC. It could even have come from the archives where Jewish treasures were stored.
3. When the U.S. Army agreed to print fifty tracts, Dr. Joseph Schwartz asked JDC-Munich to use their ingenuity to find the paper to print up 500 sets. One must recall that war-devastated Germany with rationing was hardly a place to order special paper! Obstacles were overcome and all the varieties of paper, pages, binding, etc., were obtained.
4. JDC also involved itself in providing transportation, our vehicles, trucks, and gasoline for a constant movement of proof-readers to Heidelberg from Munich.
5. Mention was made that the U.S. Army gave the printers extra "rations," The rations in kind were far superior than ~~we gave~~ ^{GIVEN BY JDC} the printers and the many religious persons involved in this interesting project. ^{THOSE GIVEN}

6. Everybody knew about the project. The leadership of our committee in Munich were certainly not religious, but were very much moved by this gesture of the U.S. Army to print a Shas and, of course, our important involvement. It was known in all the DP camps and mentioned by the Rabbis in their speeches at services.
7. The U.S. Army gave our committee a special status by attaching a Lt. Colonel as a liaison officer. His name was Colonel Scithers, a fine, understanding individual. I recall a conversation with him explaining what the Talmud represented. He knew approximately what it cost to print. When he told me, I pointed out that the cost of printing this magnificent document was about the cost of one light tank! He replied that the Army was not paying for it and that it was being charged to the German Government as part of the occupation costs!
8. When the printing was over the 500 sets were moved into our warehouse. Akiva Kohane and Monek Einsiger took over.
9. I believe the JDC set up a special committee to make the distribution. That story is no doubt in the files.



TDF:ad

C O P Y

A. J. D. C.
% IRC U.S. Zone Hqs.
Vol. Soc. Div.
APO 407, U.S. Army

November 3d, 1949

ZDP LETTER NO. 1670.

TO: Mr. Judah Shapiro
AJDC Paris

RE: Talmud.

I want to give you a short progress report on where we stand on the printing of the Talmud.

As of today, the first 8 volumes of 650 copies each have been printed, with an anticipated $1\frac{1}{2}$ to two volumes per month for the remaining volumes.

We have made arrangements for binding and the first volume will be bound within the next six weeks after which the average duration for binding will be approximately two weeks for each volume. The cost problem is somewhat complicated with new cost items entering into our calculation from time to time. On the basis of the best calculations which I am able to make at this time and in order to remain as close as possible to the 18,000 dollars originally granted for this project, I have decided to print the 650 volumes of each set, but to bind only 500, holding in reserve for subsequent binding the balance of 150 from each set. So far as I am able to figure it out now, this may hold us within the allocated sum. It will cost us 5.5 deutschemarks per volume for the binding.

Within about six weeks from now, we will have then completed the first volume boxed and packed and ready to be shipped with additional volumes being issued at the rate of approximately two weeks for each volume. A problem of storage presents itself when the first volume is completed. I am sure that you are aware what 650 copies of each volume means in terms of space. I, of course, have room enough in Schleissheim, but I hesitate storing the Talmud there for it is not weather-proof and in my judgment it would be much better to ship it to a more protected warehouse in France.

There is also the problem of distribution and I believe that you ought to sit together with Rabbi Sneig and Rabbi Rose (the two prime movers in the Talmud project) to discuss this problem. I have indicated that I prefer

- a) that immediately upon completion of each volume that it be packed and shipped to Paris and
- b) that the final list of individuals and organizations to receive these sets is vested in your hands.

There was a raising of eyebrows on both of these points.

I think you ought to plan on a trip to Germany within the next few weeks so that we can open up the books (I mean the accounting books and not the Talmud) and reach some decisions in which I think you ought to be involved. May I hear from you as soon as you can find the time to write. Best regards,

SLH/11

(signed) Samuel L. Haber.

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Carl E. Eng...
Shas

October 21, 1949.

Paris Letter # 3519

To: Mr. S. Tarshansky -- A.J.D.C. New York
From: Judah J. Shapiro -- A.J.D.C. Paris
Re: Publication of the Shas

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

In reply to your letter # 2917 of October 18, I can inform you that during Mr. Haber's stay in Paris last week, I discussed with him the status of the project of the printing of the Talmud in Germany. At the present time four volumes are completely printed, but it is hoped that from now on at least one volume a week will be completed. The great difficulty until now had been paper, but sufficient supplies have now been obtained so that paper will no longer be an obstacle and the press work will continue regularly. At the expected rate of work from now on, Mr. Haber estimates that it may still be possible for the Talmud to be completed by the beginning of 1950. There is only one remaining bottle-neck, and that is binding. I have explained to Mr. Haber that if binding continues to be a problem, as seen as it is off the press, it should be sent to Paris where there are no bottle-necks in getting books bound. I can only tell you that we think we have eliminated most of the obstacles that have been in our way until now, and we hope that the pace of work from now on will permit us to have a complete Talmud early in the coming year.

We are also collecting requests for the Talmud so that when we are prepared to distribute the volumes, we shall be able to ship out all the priorities immediately after.

90248
Judah J. Shapiro
Judah J. Shapiro
Director of Education

JS/rh

AMERICAN JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE
PARIS

Cult. European

Shas

August 2, 1949

Paris Letter #3216

Mrs. Henriette K. Buchman
American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
270 Madison Avenue
New York 16.
U.S.A.

Dear Henrietta,

I see from today's mail that you are back on the job once again. I do hope that you had a good vacation. I do not know what you were seeking, because people generally require so many different types of satisfactions from their vacations. Whatever it was you wanted - rest, excitement or a chance to contemplate the JDC program - I hope that you found it.

I shall try to bring you up to date on several matters, though I do not believe I am far behind because I sent material on right along during your absence.

1. I have been hearing from Carl Urbont and everything is quite in order. He is expected to be here on August 22, the hotel reservation has been made, and he understands the exact nature of his assignment. Laura Margolis and I have set aside a good deal of material with which he can start to acquaint himself, immediately after his arrival. We have let it be known in France that a new staff member will be available to deal specifically with the educational and cultural programs and there will be much work for Mr. Urbont to plunge into almost immediately. I have explained to him via correspondence of the necessity to make haste slowly and to make himself quite familiar with the background of the situation and with the structure and policy of JDC before attempting to move rapidly. I have made my own plans in such a way as to be available to him for the first several weeks of his stay so that he can obtain all the briefing and guidance that are always so necessary in the early stages of the job.

2. Mr. Shamah is now in Morocco. A brief and somewhat cryptic note from Morris Laub indicates that the immensity of the problem is overwhelming Mr. Shamah himself. What the result of the experience will be is hard to foretell. He may either recognize the tremendous difficulties and restrain his usual enthusiastic attempts to solve complete problems with the snap of his fingers. He may also, of course, wish to see a program undertaken which will eliminate the whole cluster of problems at once. At any rate, my original letter to you suggesting some discussion with Mr. Shalom about the position of Mr. Shamah, is still in order. I have also written to Mr. Tarshansky explaining that the candidacy of Mr. Ben Nathan should be directed to the Ozar Hatorah organization.

3. In the case of your inquiry about the two points in the Austria report, I can give you the following information. Dr. Schwartz has indicated that it is perfectly proper for Mr. Trobe to enter into discussions with the Central British Fund, getting them to support any special phase of the present program. Mr. Trobe has been asked to send up copies of all correspondence in this connection so that we will be informed of these discussions and of any decisions reached. We shall be glad to pass on to you such information as we receive. As for the situation of the Rabbis who did not seem to be making such progress in moving on, I reported this to Dr. Schwartz, and to Mr. Jordan. Mr. Jordan had planned to be in Vienna soon after my visit and he told me that he would look into the question and see how it might be handled. I have no further information on this point.

4. The project of the printing of the Talmud in Germany is beginning to settle down somewhat, as a result of my request to Dr. Schwartz and Mr. Beckelman that the Department of Education be charged with the coordination of all phases of this special program. The biggest obstacle thus far has been the fact that innumerable individuals have each had a finger in the pie and it was almost impossible to obtain direct information at any time about where the matter stood. Naturally, the ultimate decisions will have to be arranged with the participation of the administration, but the Department of Education will serve as the coordinator of the entire project until its completion. Here is the latest information Dr. Schwartz has made available the sum of \$18,000 for which we should obtain 650 sets of the Talmud, 10 volumes to a set. When the decision was reached it was assumed that that amount of money would actually purchase a thousand sets, but the change in currency and the scarcity of paper reduced the number of sets to 650. One week ago we were informed that the situation had become worse and that it now seemed that we would either have to add more money to obtain 650 sets or if we could spend no more, we would probably have to reduce the quantity to 500 sets. As I write, Dr. Schwartz has a memorandum on this and within the next few days, we shall probably have his decision. We have also notified all our Country Directors and Department Heads that the procedure to be followed for anyone requesting a set of this Talmud is to submit the application to the Department of Education. I am enclosing several copies of the mimeographed memorandum giving this information which you may use as you see fit. If Dr. Schwartz indicated some confusion on this point, it was probably because he was away when we organized this procedure.

5. There is still no decision on exactly what is to be done in Italy. We have had a considerable amount of discussion on the problem and the issues are money as well as a policy of involving local participation in any program that we undertake. It is apparent that any program will require a period of continuity of approximately 3 years, and it is extremely difficult for JDC to undertake a program over that period of time. My own report and recommendations attempt to offer a way in which we could undertake the total program on the basis of only annual commitments. I am enclosing a copy of my report. I would suggest that this report be regarded as confidential until such a time as we are prepared to indicate what we are going to do about it.

Judah J. Shapiro
Director of Education

July 22, 1949

To: All Country Directors and Departmental Heads
From: Judah J. Shapiro
Re: Printing of the Talmud in Germany

Considerable publicity has been given to the printing of the Talmud in Germany which has resulted in many demands for copies. The information in this connection has become distorted and I am writing to bring to your attention the facts in the matter, and the procedure to be used in applying for copies of the Talmud.

The American Military Government is printing 50 copies of the Talmud to consist of 18 volumes. AJDC has undertaken to pay for the cost of 650 additional sets made from the same plates. Volumes paid for by AJDC will be available for distribution and every effort will be made to place these important books in such a way as to encourage Talmudic learning. Naturally, important institutions and outstanding Rabbis will be considered first. It is obvious that the number of 650 sets is small for the many requests that we are receiving. All requests for the Talmud must be received by the Department of Education of AJDC in Paris which will maintain a list on the basis of which distribution will finally be determined by the Executive Council of AJDC. We bring to your attention the inadvisability of promising volumes to anyone and suggest that all legitimate requests be turned over to the Department of Education in order that a complete list may be available when the volumes are printed. It is estimated that the printing job will be completed by approximately January 1950.

Judah J. Shapiro
Director of Education and Cultural Reconstruction

FROM: Joint Distribution Committee
270 Madison Avenue
New York 16, NY
LE 2 - 5200

FOR RELEASE
Thursday, July 14 1949

Raphael Levy, Publicity Director

JDC RELIGIOUS DIRECTOR FOR GERMANY DESCRIBES
PRINTING OF NEW "TALMUD OF SHEARITH HAPLETAH"

"The cultural treasures destroyed by the Nazis and the books which they burned can never be replaced, any more than our 6,000,000 dead martyrs can be restored to us. But the printing of this new edition of the Talmud in Germany represents a small measure of moral restitution to the Jewish people for all we have lost."

The speaker was Rabbi Solomon Shapiro, reporting last week at JDC's international headquarters, 270 Madison Avenue, New York, after three years of distinguished service as JDC Religious Director for Germany and Austria.

"Through this printing a full cycle has been completed -- this is the first Hebrew religious work to be printed in Germany since Hitler came to power," Rabbi Shapiro stated.

As he spoke, the young rabbi gently opened a copy of the "Tractate on the Sabbath," the first volume of the "Talmud of the Shearith Hapletah" (Surviving Remnant) to come from the presses in Heidelberg, Germany, in an operation undertaken jointly by the United States Army and the Joint Distribution Committee, major American agency aiding distressed Jews abroad. JDC funds used in the printing were received from the \$250,000,000 campaign of the United Jewish Appeal.

"When you pick up this Talmud," the rabbi declared, "you hold a bit of history in your hands. Copies of this Talmud are to be sent to all rabbis who were ever DP's, and to seminaries and religious institutions in Europe whose libraries were ravaged by war and the Nazis. Outstanding seminaries in Israel and the United States will also receive copies.

"Wherever there are Jewish communities, anywhere in the world, they will come to treasure this 'Talmud of the Shearith Hapletah' as reminder of one of the most tragic periods in all Jewish history, and of the incredible, almost miraculous revival that is beginning to follow out of it.

"The new Talmud," Rabbi Shapiro said, "is the result of a plea for its publication approved in 1947 by General Joseph T. McNarney, then U. S. Military Governor of Germany. The plea was made by the combined rabbinate of the DP areas, led by Rabbi Samuel Abba Sneig, DP Chief Rabbi of Germany, and formerly a distinguished rabbi of Lithuania. The plan for the Talmud's publication had the endorsement and active support of Rabbi Philip Bernstein of Rochester, General McNarney's advisor on Jewish Affairs.

(more)

"The act of the United States Army in authorizing the publication of the Talmud," Rabbi Shapiro stated, "deserves highest praise and is in full conformity with the great democratic tradition of religious freedom in the United States. Army not only authorized the publication, but agreed to underwrite the printing, production and publication costs of fifty sets. The JDC then underwrote the printing of 1,000 additional sets. The dedication of the new Talmud is to the United States Army."

In their plea for publication, the DP rabbis pointed out that during the Nazi terror Hitler systematically destroyed Jewish books of learning, and in particular had stripped Germany and other occupied areas of the Talmud. At the time of their plea practically none of the various religious seminaries and rabbis in Germany possessed full editions of the Talmud for study.

With each volume measuring 11 by 16 inches, and numbering 500 pages, the new Talmud is the 52nd edition to be printed, and is modeled after the world-famous "Vilna Shas" generally considered the best edited publication of the Talmud. The entire edition of 1,050 sets of the 16th volume "Talmud of the Shearith Hapletah," is scheduled to be ready by the end of 1949. Eight volumes have already come off the presses at Heidelberg. The final volume will contain articles by Dr. Joseph J. Schwartz, Chairman of JDC's European Executive Council, and Rabbis Bernstein and Shapiro.

A copy of the first published volume of the new Talmud, the "Sabbath Tractate," has already been presented to General Lucius B. Clay, who succeeded General McNarney as U.S. Military Governor for Germany, and who facilitated the actual publication.

Delivered Copy to Chaim Weizmann

Before he returned to the United States, Rabbi Shapiro spent six weeks in Israel on behalf of the JDC, and with Rabbi Snei presented a second copy of the Sabbath Tractate to Dr. Chaim Weizmann at the Israeli President's home in Rehovot "in the name of the thousands of Jews in German DP camps still waiting to go to Israel."

The youthful Rabbi declared, "Dr. Weizmann said to me: 'On behalf of the people of Israel I want to thank those who made this Talmud possible -- above all the American Army and the JDC'."

During his stay in Israel, Rabbi Shapiro visited about a dozen of the 20 reception centers which had been set up by the Israeli Government for the new arrivals whom JDC was bringing each day by ship and by plane from Europe, Asia, and North Africa. Everywhere, the Rabbi said, he met former DP's, men and women whom he had known in Germany.

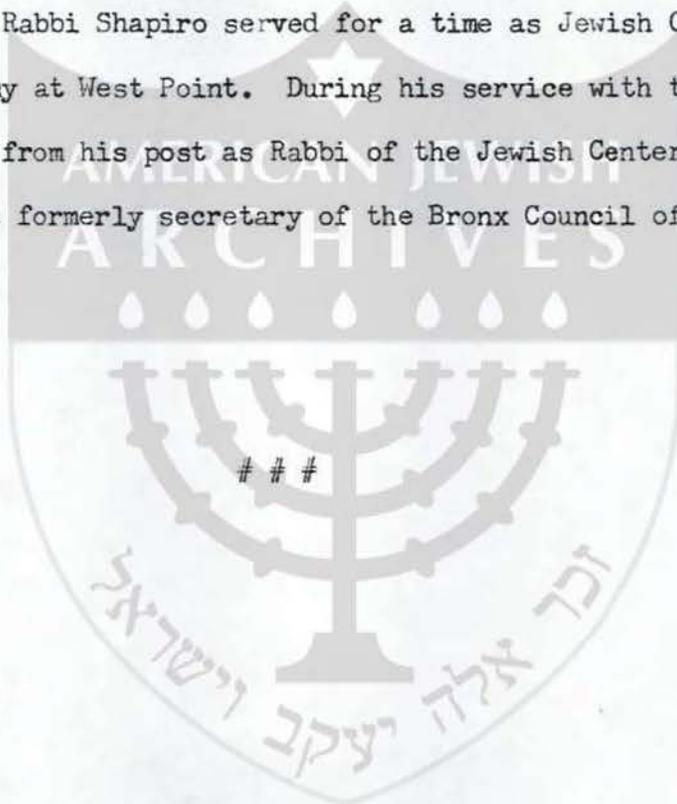
(more)

Former U. S. Army Chaplain

A member of a distinguished rabbinical family, Rabbi Shapiro is a graduate of Yeshiva University in New York, and of the Cleveland Rabbinical Seminary. Born in Rumania in 1915, the young rabbi won two battle stars during World War II as a U. S. Army Chaplain in the Pacific area, where he saw action on the island of Iwo Jima and elsewhere.

After the war, Rabbi Shapiro served for a time as Jewish Chaplain for the U. S. Military Academy at West Point. During his service with the Army and JDC, he has been on leave from his post as Rabbi of the Jewish Center of Violet Park in the Bronx. He was formerly secretary of the Bronx Council of Rabbis.

7/8/49
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FROM: Joint Distribution Committee
270 Madison Ave.
New York, N. Y.
Le-2-5200

Raphael Levy, Publicity Director

For Release
Thursday, May 26th

JDC PRINTS TALMUD IN GERMANY;

GEN. CLAY GETS FIRST COPY

"I bless your hand," said the bearded rabbi, "in presenting to you this volume embodying the highest spiritual wisdom of our people." In Berlin headquarters of the United States Army last week, chief DP Rabbi Samuel Rose clasped the hand of Gen. Lucius D. Clay and presented the retiring U. S. Military Governor with the first copy of the first Talmud printed in Germany since the rise of Adolf Hitler.

Present at the historic and solemn ceremony, held just prior to Gen. Clay's departure to the U. S., were American and DP Jewish leaders from throughout Germany including Harry Greenstein, on leave as Executive Director of the Jewish Welfare Fund of Baltimore, who is serving as adviser on Jewish affairs to the Army in Germany; Samuel Haber, JDC Director for Germany; Pesach Peikatsch, Chairman of the Central Committee of Liberated Jews; and Rabbi Solomon Shapiro, of the Bronx, N. Y. Director of JDC religious activities in Germany.

The gift to Gen. Clay was one of 1,050 copies of the Babylonian Talmud published in Germany by JDC (which paid for the printing of 1,000 copies) and the U. S. Army (which financed the printing of the first 50). Magnificently printed and brilliantly illuminated, the new edition will serve to replace the hundreds of volumes destroyed in Nazi bonfires during the Nazi decade.

Plans for printing the Talmud in Germany were drawn by JDC as long as two year ago, when DP rabbis issued a call for copies of the compilation of Jewish law, ethics and philosophy which comprise the volume. Working in close cooperation with the Civil Affairs Division of the U. S. Military Government, JDC flew two Talmuds to Germany from the U. S. to provide a guide for the basic text, then set out to procure the paper, the ink and other printing supplies necessary for production. A German plant in Heidelberg, requisitioned by the Military Government, printed the books.

This week JDC began to distribute the new Talmuds it had printed in Germany. Every DP rabbi will receive one -- those still in Germany as well as those who have emigrated to Israel, the U. S. or other lands.

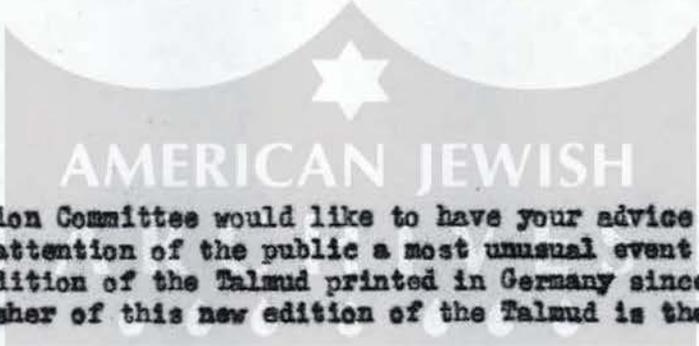
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5/19/49
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Arch. Encl.
Shane

March 11, 1949

Mr. David Niles
The White House
Washington, D. C.



Dear Dave:

The Joint Distribution Committee would like to have your advice and cooperation in bringing to the attention of the public a most unusual event -- the publication of the first edition of the Talmud printed in Germany since the rise of Hitler. The publisher of this new edition of the Talmud is the United States Government!

On August 29, 1946, Rabbi Philip Bernstein, then Adviser to General Joseph T. McNarney, Military Governor of Germany, transmitted a letter to the United States Military Government in behalf of Orthodox Jewish Displaced Persons, requesting permission for the publication in Germany of the Talmud. With General McNarney's approval, the Civil Affairs Division of the Military Government authorized the printing of fifty sets of the Talmud in March, 1947. A special printing plant at Heidelberg was requisitioned by the Army for that purpose. The publication of the Talmud was requested in order to facilitate the carrying forward of religious Jewish life and instruction in Hitler's Germany. By the act of the Military Government, the United States Government became the sponsor and publisher of the work.

In May, 1947, the Joint Distribution Committee -- major American agency aiding distressed Jews overseas -- was asked to supervise the printing project and take charge of the distribution of the printed copies. At that time the JDC undertook to finance the printing of an additional 1,000 sets of the Talmud for distribution in Germany and other areas. The first volume of this historic edition came off the press at the end of 1948.

It is our thought that we should like to present the first copy, suitably inscribed, to President Truman. Dr. Joseph J. Schwartz, director of JDC's European activities, will arrive in this country about March 18th and will be here for several weeks. I wonder if it would be possible for you to help us, if you think it advisable, to arrange to have Dr. Schwartz and Rabbi Philip Bernstein, and perhaps myself, present a copy to the President at a suitable time after March 18th.

March 11, 1949

Mr. David Niles

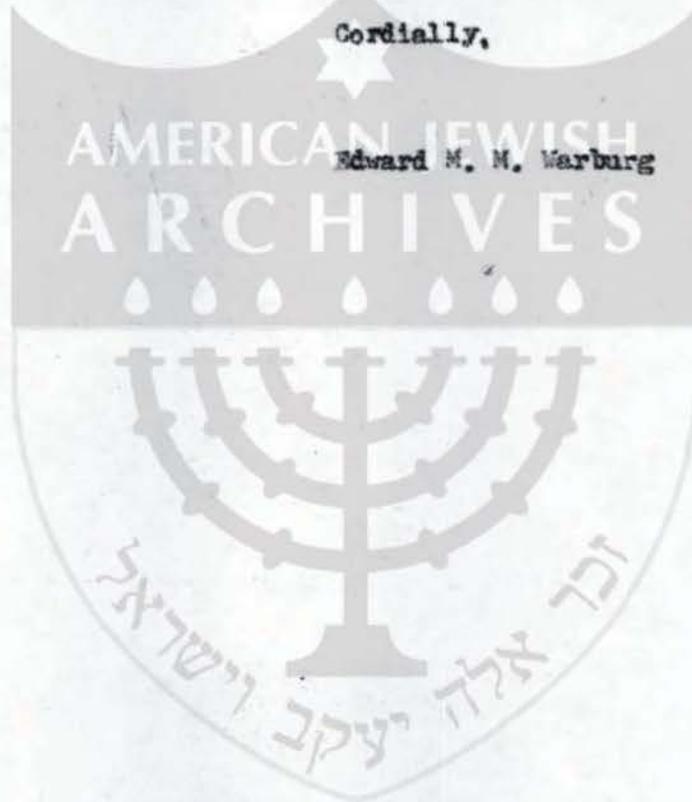
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The publication in Germany of this important body of Jewish civil and canonical law which the Talmud represents, and which has served to inspire and guide great religious figures for generations, is an event of genuine importance. For it was in Germany that Nazi tyranny set to work to destroy religious freedom, burning religious books, including the Talmud, by the hundreds of thousands. And now in Germany it is the United States Government which has taken the initiative in restoring the right of men to enjoy freedom of religious worship and observance. Thus, we feel that the presentation to the President of the first copy of the newly published Talmud will serve to dramatize to the world the enlightened role of our Army and our Government as champions of religious freedom.

Cordially,

AMERICAN JEWISH
Edward M. M. Warburg
ARCHIVES

EMW:rl



BABYLONIAN TALMUD REPRODUCED IN HEIDELBERG, GERMANY

The most monumental contribution the Joint Distribution Committee has made in its work in behalf of the Jews abroad has been the strengthening of the Jewish spirit; of its rehabilitation operations in behalf of the displaced Jewish persons in Germany, the cultural-educational and religious establishments and activities have perhaps had the most enduring effect. As part of this aspect of its ramified program, JDC reprinted hundreds of books and published about a million copies of multi-lingual text books, literary works, etc.. But the most dramatic of these projects was the republication in Heidelberg of the largest edition of the Babylonian Talmud.

The Talmud is a compilation of the Jewish Law, Judaistic philosophy and ethics and exegesis of the Holy Scriptures. The product of centuries of learning and academic discourses, the Talmud has been canonized and accepted as the encyclopedia of Jewish Oral Law, next in holiness to the Bible, the Written Law; it has been an eternal inexhaustible source of great ideas, high ideals and guide of life.

The enemies of the Jews understood the significance of the Talmud to the Jewish people. In their attempts to destroy the Jewish spirit, they usually started with burning the Talmud, as did Hitler when he singled out the Talmud at the time he ordered the public burning of Jewish books in 1938.

With the fall of Hitler and the liberation of the Jews from concentration camps, it was natural that the surviving Jews with their few spiritual leaders, in their great thirst for spiritual nourishment which was even keener than their hunger for bread, appealed to the Joint Distribution Committee and to the American Military to undertake the re-printing of the Talmud. The Military authorities grasped the historic significance of reproducing it just where Hitler attempted to destroy it; they promptly consented to the undertaking and extended their fullest cooperation toward its consummation.

After three years of strenuous effort, 700 sets of the Babylonian Talmud in 19 large volumes each, were reproduced. They were distributed to communities, congregations and schools in Germany, Italy, Greece, Morocco, Yugoslavia, Norway, Sweden, France, Algeria, Tunisia, Hungary, as well as in Israel and South Africa. The Western Hemisphere, particularly the United States, received a limited number of sets and single volumes which have been presented to institutions of higher learning, important libraries, and to the men who served as Jewish Advisers to the American Military in Germany, without whose help this achievement might not have been possible.

The Treatise Berachoth is the first volume of the Talmud. It deals mainly with prayers and benedictions and also contains descriptions of historical events and traditions, legends of biblical and post-biblical personalities, favorite sayings and prayers of the Sages, religious and ethical proverbs and aphorisms, as well as moral behavior. The text of this volume, as of the entire Talmud, is accompanied by commentaries and interpretations developed in the course of centuries.

The cover page has illustrations which symbolize the redemption of the Jews from Hitler's yoke. The quotation from Psalm 119, v. 87, - "They well-nigh consumed me in the land; but I forsook not Thy precepts", expresses the enduring spirit of Judaism. The second page contains a statement of the gratitude of the rabbinate in Germany to the U.S. Army and to the Joint Distribution Committee.

Indicated with Star I on 1 by J. S. Goldstein



BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

B. P. L. NEWS



Vol. 3. No. 7

Boston, Massachusetts

SEPTEMBER 1951

Mattapan Teen-Agers Resume Film Forums

A series of *Teen-Age Film Forums*, similar to those which proved so successful at the Mattapan Branch Library last year, will be organized during the month of September. Due to the great interest shown in last year's programs, the Branch Library will have two groups this year—a junior high school forum alternate each month with the senior high school discussion group. At regular intervals during September the students of each group will meet to plan their topics and choose their panels. They will also choose films from a selected list to supplement each discussion. The film forums will commence in October.

Unusual Shell Collection Shown at Memorial Branch

An exhibition of shells may be seen at the Memorial Branch Library from September 1 through September 21. Consisting of about 500 items, the display will include shells from one-eighth of an inch to two feet size.

Edward Sossen, a young assistant at the Branch Library, will lend the shells. This seventeen-year old boy became interested in collecting two years ago when he found an unusual shell at Revere Beach. He now has more than 1500 from all parts of the world and is planning to be a marine biologist.

His collection is important because it contains all types from clam shells to cameos. The forms vary from that of a huge conch to a tiny tear-drop, while the color range is from white to dark gunmetal. Of particular interest is the money cowry, a medium of exchange in Africa, and a textile cone, which has a poisonous bite.

West End Branch Library Receives Gift

The Jewish Joint Distribution Committee has recently presented to the West End Branch Library, as an addition to its steadily growing Judaica collection, a nineteen volume edition of the *Babli Talmud*. Known as *The Talmud of the Surviving Remnant*, the edition was printed in Heidelberg, the center of German book burning in 1933, under the joint sponsorship of the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the American Army of Occupation. The books were designed for the use of the Jews in the Displaced Persons Camps. These were discontinued as immigration to Israel increased. As a result a few sets of this rare edition became available for distribution in America to "legitimate heirs of heirless Jewish property." The Boston Public Library is one of the two public libraries in the United States so honored.

LABOR'S ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY EXHIBIT FOUR DIFFERENT PHASES ARE DESCRIBED THE LIBRARY'S SERVICE TO LABOR TOLD

In observance of Labor Day, an exhibit on *Labor's Role in the Community*, with posters, pamphlets, and photographs supplied by local AFL and CIO unions or chosen from the Library's special collection of books on trade unions, will be presented in the Main Lobby of the Central Library from August 31 through September 30. Each individual will find that he has the same interests as does a union member, since the community is important to both.

Of particular interest to the people of Greater Boston will be the unit on *The Union Program with the Social Services*, describing the activities of Stephen E. McCloskey, the AFL Consultant, and of Berry Aronson, the CIO Consultant, for the United Community Services of Metropolitan Boston. Mr. McCloskey has stated, "Through labor's participation program, the United Community Services have helped

(Continued on Page Three)

Never Too Late Group New Season is Opened

The members of *The Never Too Late Group* will open the 1951-52 season with a series of sound motion pictures depicting natural scenery on Thursdays, September 20 and 27, at 2:00 p.m., in the Lecture Hall of the Central Library.

Adventures of Chico and Animals Unlimited will be shown on September 20. *Adventures of Chico*, a documentary film photographed in Central Mexico, is the story of a little Mexican peon and his animal friends. *Animals Unlimited*, filmed in the Union of South Africa, shows wild animal life in its natural state.

The national parks of the United States and Canada will be the subject of the films to be shown on September 27. *Yosemite — End of the Rainbow*, with scenes of Bridalveil Falls, Giant Sequoias, El Capitan, and other natural wonders; *Realm of the Wild*, a survey of wild life in national parks and forests; and *Rocky Mountain Trout*, depicting Jasper National Park whose turquoise lakes and mountain streams hold rich promise for the angler, are the films to be shown.

All mentally-alert persons, sixty years of age or older, are invited to join *The Never Too Late Group*. Weekly meetings will be held in the Lecture Hall of the Central Library, on Thursdays, at 2:00 p.m.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The *B. P. L. News* mailing list is being revised. No further issues will be sent by mail unless a request for renewal is received on or before Friday, September 21. Comments and suggestions are invited. Please address all communications to: *B.P.L. News*, Boston Public Library, Boston 17, Massachusetts.

CARE AND REPAIR OF PIANOS DISPLAY WORK OF NORTH BENNET STREET SCHOOL

The Boston Public Library will present an exhibit illustrating the work, aims, and purposes of the North Bennet Street Industrial School's department in piano tuning, regulating, and repairing, from August 31 through September 30. To supply a great need for technicians in this field, the school undertook in 1947 to revive a more or less "dying art" by inaugurating the department, one of the few in the United States. Skilled

(Continued on Page Two)

Kirstein Business Branch

Transportation will be the theme of the Kirstein Business Branch window display from September 4 through September 30. Books, pamphlets, and periodicals, against a background of posters and photographs, will indicate what the Library's collections offer to patrons who are interested in railroads, airlines, and motor vehicles.

THE TALMUD--SYMBOL OF THE JEWS' SPIRITUAL RESURGENCE

by Fanny Goldstein

Librarian, West End Branch Library

An historic event took place at the West End Branch of the Boston Public Library last Sunday afternoon, when Mr. Samuel Markell in behalf of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee presented an edition of the Babli Talmud to the Judaica Collection of the West End Branch Library in the presence of nearly 200 people. In view of this occasion the question has been asked by many, "What is the Talmud?"

The word Talmud means study. It is a record of about a thousand years of Jewish learning and wisdom in all fields of endeavor. It is the Oral Law, written down in contrast to the Bible, which is the Written Law. The Talmud was a result of modification, change and adaptability, while the Bible was static, permanent and unchangeable.

There are two compilations of the Talmud: The Palestinian and the Babylonian-- they differ in time, language and scope. The Palestinian or Jerusalem Talmud is a product of the middle fourth century, c.e.; it is written in Western Aramaic, and has in general exerted a negligible influence on posterity. The Babylonian Talmud on the other hand has been a source of power and strength to world Jewry. Its compilation was begun in the beginning of the Fifth Century, c.e., by Rab Ashi at the Academy of Sura, in Babylonia, where the Jews had been living unmolested for a long time, and where scholarship and learning flourished. The date of its completion is generally set at 500 c.e. The Babylonian Talmud is written in an Aramaic dialect, and is about four times as large as the Palestinian Talmud, and contains some 2,500,000 words.

The first complete edition of the Babylonian, or Babli Talmud, was published in Venice between 1520-1523. The standard edition is that of Romm, commonly called the Vilna Edition, which came out about the middle of the Nineteenth Century. By 1872 some sixty-three editions were issued. In the first decade of the Twentieth Century, the first attempt to translate the Talmud into English was made by Michael Levi Rodkinson of New York, but only four tractates were translated. Recently, the famous

Soncino Press of London completed publication of a new edition of the entire Babylonian Talmud, and it is of interest to note that an edition is now being prepared in Israel.

For a comprehensive view of the Talmud, it must be considered both as a historic and literary product. From the point of view of literary history, it is a unique compilation. Its peculiar form is due to the fact that it is almost entirely composed of individual sayings and discussion of these sayings.

The external history of the Talmud reflects itself in the history of Judaism. It has persisted in a world of hostility and persecution. The Edict of Justinian dictated by Christian zeal and anti-Jewish feeling was the prelude to attacks on the Talmud. A charge was brought in Paris in 1244 led by a convert which resulted in the burning not only of the Talmud, but tons of other correlated Jewish books. Then followed the Papal Bulls, and censorship attacks, and disputations, and struggles, and confiscations, and burnings.

The Talmud and its study spread first from Babylonia to Egypt, North Africa, Italy, Spain, France and Germany, regions destined to become the abodes of the Jewish spirit; and in all these countries intellectual interest and religious zeal centered on the Talmud. During the decline of the intellectual life among the Jews which began in the Sixteenth Century the Talmud was regarded by the majority of Jews almost as the supreme authority, and in the same century, Eastern Europe, especially Poland became the seat of its study. Even the Bible was relegated to a secondary place and the Jewish scholars devoted themselves almost exclusively to the study of the Talmud. "Study" became synonymous with the study of the Talmud.

The printing of the Talmud never varies. The first edition of the Babylonian Talmud has a pagination which has been retained in all subsequent editions. This rendering has made it possible to quote pages with exactness and to find citations readily. It has been said that a scholar can put a pin prick through a given page of any edition and then quote chapter and verse with accuracy.

In the Middle Ages, it formed the main teaching of Jewish religious life and was regarded as the core of Jewish resistance to the conversion to Christianity. The Talmud and the "Talmud Jews" later became objects of Anti-Semitic attacks, yet many Christian students of the Talmud rose to its defense. It has exercised a two-fold influence both as a work of literature and as a historic factor in Judaism in the guidance and formulation of religious life and thought. It has also served to awaken and to develop intellectual activity. Its wealth of moral instruction has exercised profound influence upon the ethics and ideals of Judaism. The external history of the Talmud reflects in part the history of Judaism for it has persisted in being alive in a world of hostility and persecution.

Jewish learning has done full justice to the Talmud throughout the centuries. Scholars, especially since the Nineteenth Century, have made note-worthy contributions to its history and textual criticism, and its study has attracted many non-Jewish scholars. During the centuries the Talmud has undergone many burnings, but always it has risen out of the ashes with a new vitality and resiliency and with a greater resurgence of strength that has sent the Jews ever forward with new hope.

On May 10th, 1933, the news was flashed across the world that Germany was burning books. Most people were shocked, but few people realized the significance of these bonfires. They not only darkened the skies by their smoke, but they did what Edgar A. Mowrer called, "set the clocks of civilization back."

From that date on, not only books were burned, but Hitler created crematoria for human beings, with the hope that the extermination of the Jews would make it possible for the perfect Aryan to emerge in the New Reich and later in the world. All this brought on the Second World War, and blood baths followed. When in 1945, Germany was conquered and peace was finally declared, the concentration camp doors were opened and the world stood speechless and aghast.

It was then that the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee in cooperation with the American Army of Occupation took over the evacuation of the D. P.

Camps. They found that human beings had degenerated to almost a primitive state and that children who had been born amidst this chaos had never seen a book. Perhaps the greatest factor in the process of rehabilitation was to bring light and books of learning back again into the lives of these tortured people. As a part of this process the Joint Distribution Committee found it necessary to publish books not only suitable for the use of the D. P. 's but to do so as rapidly as possible. Hence, books printed in an off-set process were created. These books constituted a wide range. They commenced with simple beginner's readers for the children, -- children who had never seen a book. Text books, holiday and ceremonial material, and prayer books were published in several languages, such as Yiddish, Hebrew, Polish, German, French, etc. When at last, only a short time ago, the camps were finally evacuated, a number of these books left over were brought to America by the Joint Distribution Committee and the Jewish Cultural Reconstruction Committee and made available as gifts to American Libraries fostering Jewish life and Education.

Crowning this project of book publishing and distribution a new edition of the Talmud was undertaken while the camps were still going strong, which was not completed when they were closed. This remarkable edition is known as the "Talmud of the Surviving Remnant". It is a copy of the Vilna Shas, two sets of which had to be flown to Germany from New York, because none could be found in Nazi-destroyed Europe. It was the original intention to publish 1,200 sets for the use of the D.P.'s. With the closing of the camps and this Talmud still on the presses, it was decided to reduce the size of the edition to about 700 sets. 300 sets were ear-marked for Israel, the others to be distributed to libraries serving Jewish communities throughout the world. It is this set of the Talmud, in nineteen volumes, measuring 6 1/2" x 11 1/2", the publishing of which was originally undertaken to alleviate the dearth of Jewish books and particularly those of higher learning caused by the war and by the Nazi atrocities during which the Talmud was burned

which has recently come to America.

In view of the special significance and the limited number of sets brought to this country, to be presented to institutions of higher learning as tokens of appreciation for the help given by American Jewry to the work of the Joint Distribution Committee's efforts to rehabilitate the religious and spiritual life of our people abroad, these sets are immeasurably precious gifts which symbolize the endeavor to revive Judaism and the Jewish spirit where Hitler sought to destroy them. We welcome one of them today as a gift to this library.

It is a precious heritage which bears testimony to the fact that the light of Israel never goes out. It may become dim, but never extinguished. The Babli Edition of the Talmud was printed in Heidelberg where Nazi bonfires and human degradation were on the rampage. A veritable modern miracle took place, -- Jewish books were again published in the very same city and went forth to acclaim Israel's strength. The oppressors are gone and forgotten, the Talmud revived.

At this special ceremony of presenting this Talmud for the benefit of Boston Jewry, Mr. Samuel Markell summarized in part the role of the Joint Distribution Committee. He pointed out the fact that not only is the JDC concerned with the dispersion of monies of a charitable nature, but it is also deeply concerned with the coordination of cultural and educational forces which have been undermined with the decimation of millions of Jews in Europe. He presented this Talmud to the West End Branch Judaica Collection and gave the following three quotations, of what the Talmud has been considered by three outstanding writers.

- I "Out of its mines the workmen are still bringing fresh gems of light and its deep lying strata furnish an inexhaustible field for research in almost every department of human knowledge."
- II "It was tonic and preservative. It was to be cherished, but not made an idol of, to be venerated but not worshipped. It was a work to be studied, but not regarded as infallible authority. It was to be analyzed, dissected, subjected :

to criticism as the work of men. It supplied ammunition to all schools in modern Jewry.

"Right, left or center.

"Progressive or conservative.

"Orthodox or reform."

- III "Its contribution to progress is to be found in the frequent times in which it rises out of its environment to lift the human spirit to worthier ideals and better hopes."

Miss Fanny Goldstein, West End Branch Librarian, accepted the set. She read a letter from the Director, Mr. Milton E. Lord, and then closed with the following comments.

This is an historical moment and it is with deep humility that I rise to meet the challenge. It is indeed a privilege to witness and to accept in behalf of the Director and the Trustees of the Boston Public Library this new edition of the Talmud which bears testimony to the fact that the Jews can not be extinguished. Through weal and woe, through historic crises and blood baths, through decimation and holocaust, he emerges with his book and renewed faith and zeal to take up his pack on the march of history, each time toward civilization. The Jewish book has been the symbol of Jewish life, the Bible and the Talmud, culminating as the apex of our spiritual devotion, our concept and our dedication to learning and study.

To merely witness this set of the Talmud is a veritable thrill and an inspiration which creates new consecration and dedicatory values.

This particular edition was published in Heidelberg, the very city which in 1333 stood out so preeminently with its bonfires and where the Talmud was burned with demoniac festivities as a symbol of the Jew's extinction. Now less than eighteen years after these bonfires, a miracle has occurred. This Talmud arises from the printing presses of Heidelberg to go forth to proclaim the Jew's everlasting continuity. It bespeaks a resurgence of vitality which emphasizes the thought that "the pen is mightier than the sword." Israel's oppressors of yesteryear are gone and forgotten, but here, today, is a new commemorative edition of the Talmud at the West End Branch of the Boston Public Library, for all those who wish to know and to learn.

To the best of my knowledge this library and the Jewish Division of the New York Public Library are the only public libraries in the country to receive these sets. We take pleasure in accepting this memorable edition for the Judaica Collection of the West End Branch of the Boston Public Library, so that all who seek Jewish learning and light may find it in this Talmud.



FROM: Joint Distribution Committee
270 Madison Avenue
New York 16, N. Y.
LE-2-5200

Edna S. Pinkusohn
Publicity Director

For Release
Thursday, June 21

YALE, HARVARD, OTHER UNIVERSITIES AND SEMINARIES
RECEIVE JDC-PRINTED "TALMUD OF SURVIVING REMNANT"

Sets of the "Talmud of the Surviving Remnant," which the Joint Distribution Committee published in Germany with the cooperation of the U. S. Army, have been presented to a number of outstanding universities and religious seminaries throughout the United States, it was announced last week by Rabbi Leo Jung, Chairman of JDC's Religious and Cultural Committee.

The bulk of the 700 sets of the reproduced Talmud has already been distributed to yeshivoth and other religious and educational institutions in Europe and Israel.

Universities in the U. S. which have received sets of the 19-volume work include: Yale, Harvard, Chicago, Columbia, Brandeis, Yeshiva University, Jewish Theological Seminary, Jewish Institute of Religion-Hobrow Union College, Dropsie College and other rabbinical colleges and yeshivoth in Los Angeles, Baltimore, Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland and Roxbury, Mass., as well as the Library of Congress and the New York Public Library. In addition, sets have been sent to a number of similar institutions in Canada and in South America.

Publication of the Talmud was approved in 1947 by the U. S. Army, which also agreed to underwrite the printing and production of the first fifty sets, with JDC financing the rest of the edition with funds received from the United Jewish Appeal.

The new Talmud is the 52nd edition of the ancient work to be printed, and is modeled after the world-famous "Vilna Shas," generally considered the best-edited publication of the Talmud. Two copies of the Vilna work, unobtainable elsewhere, had to be shipped by JDC from New York City to Heidelberg, where the new edition was then printed from photographic plates. Each volume measures $11\frac{1}{2}$ by $16\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and numbers between 400 and 700 pages.

The first copy of the first volume off the presses was presented in May, 1949 to General Lucius D. Clay, then U. S. Military Governor of Germany, in recognition of the part played by the American Army in making the Talmud project possible. Subsequently, presentations were also made to Chaim Weizmann, President of Israel, and other Israeli officials.

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6/14/51

BABYLONIAN TALMUD REPRODUCED IN HEIDELBERG, GERMANY

The most monumental contribution the Joint Distribution Committee has made in its work in behalf of the Jews abroad has been the strengthening of the Jewish spirit; of its rehabilitation operations in behalf of the displaced Jewish persons in Germany, the cultural-educational and religious establishments and activities have perhaps had the most enduring effect. As part of this aspect of its ramified program, JDC reprinted hundreds of books and published about a million copies of multi-lingual text books, literary works, etc.. But the most dramatic of these projects was the republication in Heidelberg of the largest edition of the Babylonian Talmud.

The Talmud is a compilation of the Jewish law, Judaistic philosophy and ethics and exegesis of the Holy Scriptures. The product of centuries of learning and academic discourses, the Talmud has been canonized and accepted as the encyclopedia of Jewish Oral Law, next in holiness to the Bible, the Written Law; it has been an eternal inexhaustible source of great ideas, high ideals and guide of life.

The enemies of the Jews understood the significance of the Talmud to the Jewish people. In their attempts to destroy the Jewish spirit, they usually started with burning the Talmud, as did Hitler when he singled out the Talmud at the time he ordered the public burning of Jewish books in 1938.

With the fall of Hitler and the liberation of the Jews from concentration camps, it was natural that the surviving Jews with their few spiritual leaders, in their great thirst for spiritual nourishment which was even keener than their hunger for bread, appealed to the Joint Distribution Committee and to the American Military to undertake the re-printing of the Talmud. The Military authorities grasped the historic significance of reproducing it just where Hitler attempted to destroy it; they promptly consented to the undertaking and extended their fullest cooperation toward its consummation.

After three years of strenuous effort, 700 sets of the Babylonian Talmud in 19 large volumes each, were reproduced. They were distributed to communities, congregations and schools in Germany, Italy, Greece, Morocco, Yugoslavia, Norway, Sweden, France, Algeria, Tunisia, Hungary, as well as in Israel and South Africa. The Western Hemisphere, particularly the United States, received a limited number of sets and single volumes which have been presented to institutions of higher learning, important libraries, and to the men who served as Jewish Advisers to the American Military in Germany, without whose help this achievement might not have been possible.

The Treatise Berachoth is the first volume of the Talmud. It deals mainly with prayers and benedictions and also contains descriptions of historical events and traditions, legends of biblical and post-biblical personalities, favorite sayings and prayers of the Sages, religious and ethical proverbs and aphorisms, as well as moral behavior. The text of this volume, as of the entire Talmud, is accompanied by commentaries and interpretations developed in the course of centuries.

The cover page has illustrations which symbolize the redemption of the Jews from Hitler's yoke. The quotation from Psalm 119, v. 87, - "They well-nigh consumed me in the land; but I forsook not Thy precepts", expresses the enduring spirit of Judaism. The second page contains a statement of the gratitude of the rabbinate in Germany to the U.S. Army and to the Joint Distribution Committee.

45/64# 1266

BOARD OF DEPUTIES RECEIVES HEIDELBERG TALMUD

Monument To Martyred German Jewry

A work printed as a monument to martyred German Jewry was presented to the S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies at the last monthly meeting of Deputies in Johannesburg by Mr. Max Greenstein, National Chairman of the S.A. Jewish Appeal. This work is the Heidelberg Talmud, running to 19 volumes, printed in a limited edition by Jews in Heidelberg, Germany, and known as "The Talmud of the Surviving Remnants." The set of volumes will be lodged in the future South African Jewish Library.

In making the presentation, Mr. Greenstein said that when the war was over and the camps in Germany were still full of Displaced Persons, there was a demand for copies of the Talmud for study. Owing to the Nazi "burning of the books," no copies of the Talmud were to be found. The Joint Distribution Committee had, with the assistance of the United States Military Authorities, been able to arrange for the printing of this edition. The Military Authorities had gladly co-operated and had defrayed the costs of 50 sets.

The Joint Distribution Committee had paid for the other 750 sets out of the funds collected from world Jewry, including South African Jewry. For that reason, the Joint Distribution Committee had presented this set to the South African Jewish Appeal for South African Jewry, and he now handed it over to the Board of Deputies for inclusion in the communal library.

This edition of the Talmud was the 52nd since the Talmud had first been printed. It was a handsome production modelled on the famous Vilna Shass. This set would serve as a perpetual symbol of the work

of relief and rehabilitation performed for the Displaced Persons in Germany by the South African Jewish community, through the South African Jewish Appeal, which was still doing good work.

Mr. I. A. Maisels, K.C., Chairman of the S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies, thanking the South African Jewish Appeal for the gift, described it as "bitter-sweet"—a reminder of the tragic fate that had befallen European Jewry, but, at the same time, a proof of the unshakable determination of the Jewish people to survive. The communal library had not yet come to fruition, but when it was established, this edition of the Talmud would find an honoured place

15 APRIL 1951
ZIONIST RECORD
509 1951

New Edition Of The Talmud

A SENSE of solemnity should fill every South African Jew when he reads in this issue of the Zionist Record of the presentation to the S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies of the 52nd edition of the Talmud. The Board will keep this edition of the Talmud for the communal library which leaders of the community have in view.

This edition of the Talmud was printed in Germany for the Jews of the D.P. camps. It ran to 700 copies. Three hundred copies went to the Yeshivot and libraries in Israel, 300 to various institutions throughout the world, and the rest to private people who were helpful in the execution of the great venture. Only three copies will remain in Europe. The first two copies were sent to President Truman and President Weizmann.

The cost of this edition was 85,000 dollars, 35,000 being borne by the Joint Distribution Committee and 50,000 by the American Army. The preface pays tribute to the American Army which "played the chief role in the liberation of Jews and the rescue of the Jewish people from complete destruction."

It then goes on to make this brief observation: "This edition has been published in the country which not long ago undertook to eradicate the last sign of Jewish culture."

When this edition saw the light of day Hitler was dead two years. Fire and sword, it was shown again, cannot swallow the Talmud.

There is a moral in this not only for those who would persecute the Jew. There is the moral for the Jew himself. He must once again learn to use this well of Jewish spiritual might.

45/64

#1266

RABBI HERBERT A. FRIEDMAN
TEMPLE EMANUEL
DENVER, COLORADO

Chas Shass
FEB 15 1951

13 Feb 51

Dear Moe -

I can't tell you how pleased ²⁰⁵⁰⁵ I was to receive your letter of 8 Feb, saying that a set of the DP Talmud had been reserved for me. Secretly, I have cherished the hope for a long time that I would be able to have one. I have hesitated to ask, but, by coincidence, I mentioned to Joe in Chicago two weekends ago, that I really had always wanted a set - both for the sentimental memories it evokes, and because of the fact that I do not possess a complete Shass.

Many many thanks for thinking of me.
I would appreciate your sending it to me at:

Temple Emanuel
1595 Pearl St.
Denver 5 Colo.

As ever,
Herbert

45/64 #1266

1-24-51

General Files

FROM: Joint Distribution Committee
270 Madison Avenue
New York 16, N.Y.
LE 2-5200

For Release
Thursday, February 1

Edna S. Finkusohn, Publicity Director

Cult Europe
Shos

COPIES OF NEW JDC-FINANCED TALMUD, PRINTED IN GERMANY,
PRESENTED TO N. Y. PUBLIC LIBRARY, YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

Two sets of a new 19-volume edition of the centuries-old Talmud, body of Jewish laws and ethics, were presented last week to the New York Public Library and Yeshiva University, by Moses A. Leavitt, Executive Vice-Chairman of the Joint Distribution Committee, and Rabbi Leo Jung, Chairman of JDC's Cultural and Religious Committee.

The Talmuds, the first sets to be distributed in the United States, were accepted for their institutions by Dr. Joshua Eloch, Chief of the Public Library's Jewish Division, and Dr. Moses L. Isaacs, Dean of Yeshiva's College of Arts and Sciences, in a ceremony at JDC headquarters, 270 Madison Avenue.

Printed in Heidelberg, Germany, the 700-set edition was financed by JDC in cooperation with the United States Army. The bulk of the copies of the new Talmud, known as the "Talmud of the Surviving Remnant," has already been sent to Israel for distribution to yeshivoth and other institutions throughout the Holy Land, with 45 copies to be presented to religious and educational institutions in the United States, Canada and Latin America.

In making the presentation, Rabbi Jung declared that "although the terrible treatment of European Jewry at the hands of the Nazis can never be forgotten, this Talmud offers another consoling evidence of the miraculous capacity of the Jewish people to rise above the most terrible disasters.

"No sooner had the war ended and thousands of Jews emerged from the concentration camps and from their hiding places than Jewish spiritual leaders began to consider the need for a new edition of the Talmud to replace some of the many thousands destroyed by the Nazis. The printing of this work, which has held a scattered and

(more)

persecuted people together for centuries, represents, in part, the resurrection of Jewish life overseas since the war."

Publication of the Talmud was approved in 1947 by the U.S. Army, which also agreed to underwrite the printing and production of the first fifty sets, with JDC financing the rest of the edition with funds received from the United Jewish Appeal.

The new Talmud is the 52nd edition of the ancient work to be printed, and is modeled after the world-famous "Vilna Shas," generally considered the best-edited publication of the Talmud. Two copies of the Vilna work, unobtainable elsewhere, had to be shipped by JDC from New York City to Heidelberg, where the new Talmud was then printed from photographic plates. Each volume measures $11\frac{1}{2}$ by $16\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and numbers between 400 and 700 pages.

The first copy of the first volume off the presses was presented in May, 1949 to General Lucius D. Clay, then U.S. Military Governor of Germany, in recognition of the part played by the American Army in making the Talmud project possible. Subsequently, presentations were also made to Chaim Weizmann, President of Israel, and other Israeli officials.

1/24/51

4/5/64
#1265

3/22/60

MEMORANDUM

*Curt Europ.
Shon*

With reference to the Talmud printed in Germany, the project was first approved in 1947 by the Military, specifically General Joseph T. McNarney, then U.S. Military Governor of Germany, in response to a plea made by the Combined rabbinate of the DP areas. The American Military Government provided for the printing of 50 sets of the Talmud; the JDC undertook to pay for the cost of 650 additional sets made from the same plates. The plates consisted of photographs of one of the two sets of the Talmud sent by the JDC in New York to Germany for this purpose. The JDC overseas organization made available \$18,000. for the printing of the 650 sets. When the allocation was originally made, it was assumed that this amount would actually provide for 1,000 sets, but the change in currency and the scarcity of paper reduced the number to 650.

The 50 sets provided by the Military were distributed among the rabbinate and DPs in Germany. Of the additional 650 sets which the JDC made available, some were distributed in Germany and the balance to communities throughout the world -- European countries, South America, South Africa, North Africa, Australia, Canada and Israel. The distribution of these sets is approximately as follows:

Israel	400
United States	70
South America	10
European countries	50
North Africa	10
South Africa	1
Canada	10

In the United States, we made sets available to the Library of Congress, the Main Public Library in New York City, Boston Public Library, and institutions of higher learning - Jewish and non-sectarian - among them, New York University Library, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Dropsie College, Hebrew College in Baltimore, Hebrew Theological College of Chicago, Brandeis University, University of Judaism in Los Angeles, Columbia University, Harvard University, Yale University, University of Chicago, University of California in Berkeley, College of Jewish Studies in Chicago, Yiddish Scientific Institute in New York City, Hebrew Union College and others.

sets were also presented to a limited number of outstanding individuals: President Harry S. Truman, General Lucius Clay, the Jewish Advisers to the Military in Germany, and others, because of their interest and helpfulness to the JDC programs abroad, and particularly in connection with the publication of the Talmud in Germany.

HKB: BK
3/22/60

Culbr. Europe
Shos

October 20, 1953

Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein
Temple Brith Kodesh
117 Gibbs Street
Rochester 5, N.Y.

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

Dear Rabbi Bernstein:

In Mr. Leavitt's absence abroad, we wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter of October 14th, with a copy of the letter Mr. Herbert C. Zafren of the Hebrew Union College Library wrote to you. Perhaps the following will help to answer Mr. Zafren's questions:

Some odd volumes of the Talmud were published in Germany late in 1945 or early in 1946. Rabbi Alexander Rosenberg, sent by the JDC to Germany in the fall of 1945 as director of religious activities, wrote us as follows in February 1946 in this connection: "The publication of religious text books through individual initiative of local rabbis has been facilitated by the encouragement and sanction I received from UMRA and the military for the project. Three tractates of the Talmud, a prayer book, a Hagadah, a book of Esther, and a guide to religious marriage are either in process of publication or are already published."

The publication of the 1,000 sets of the Talmud, for which the JDC provided funds, with the military paying for the first 50 sets, was started in March 1947. In order to make this project possible, the Joint Distribution Committee purchased a full set of the Babylonian Talmud in this country and shipped it to Germany where it was reproduced through the photo off-set process. As you know, the project was undertaken in order to meet the acute need for books of religious higher learning and to replace some of the essential Jewish books and literature destroyed during the Nazi regime. As part of its ramified program, the JDC reprinted hundreds of books and published about one million copies of multi-lingual text books, literary works, etc.. But the most dramatic of these projects, and perhaps the most significant historically, was the republication in ^{Rosenberg}Germany of the largest edition of the Babylonian Talmud. The first volumes did not come off the press until the latter part of 1948.

The tractates dated 1946, which Mr. Zafren states the Hebrew Union College re-

(cont'd.)

Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein

October 20, 1953

ceived a number of years ago from Rabbi Klausner, apparently came from the individual tractates mentioned in the above quotation from Rabbi Rosenberg's report. As regards Mr. Zafren's question about the "Rabbinat", you may recall that it consisted of the combined rabbinate of the IP areas, headed by Rabbi Samuel Abba Snieg, formerly distinguished rabbi of Lithuania. In the Talmud project, he had associated with him Rabbi Samuel Jacob Rose. Both names appear at the end of the dedication page of the Heidelberg edition.

If there are any further questions, please do not hesitate to write us.

Sincerely yours,

Henrietta K. Buchman
Executive Assistant



HKB:BK